



Kansas Kids Invited to Design Improved Aircraft Technology

Posted: 12:54 PM Aug 21, 2008

Last Updated: 12:54 PM Aug 21, 2008

A | A | A

To prepare Kansas students for the in-demand jobs of today and tomorrow, Governor Kathleen Sebelius has announced a partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy for Kansas students to enter the 'Real World Design Challenge' - a nationwide contest that puts high school students along side industry experts to solve real engineering problems.

"The goal of this nation-wide challenge is to inspire students to succeed in the critical areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics," Sebelius said. "These areas will play a critical part in preparing the next generation of Kansas workers for twenty-first century jobs."

The 'Real World Design Challenge' will give Kansas high school students the opportunity to use computer-aided design (CAD) software while looking for ways to increase aircraft performance and reduce operating costs.

Students working on the project will also be able to collaborate online with mentors from the aviation/aerospace industry; Department of Energy laboratories across the country; and scientists from the Oakridge National Laboratory in Tennessee.

Engineers from Kansas-based Cessna Aircraft Company led a national group of experts from education and the aviation/aerospace industry in developing the curricula for this aviation-themed design project. Other contributors include the Federal Aviation Administration, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science, Build-A-Plane and many others.

Students and teachers in high schools across the state will form teams to work on this Real World Design Challenge and will also participate in local and state competitions. Governor Sebelius will announce a winner early next year to represent Kansas in the final competition to be held at the National Academy of Engineering in Washington D.C.

Kansas teachers will also receive millions of dollars worth of computer-aided design (CAD) software provided by Parametric Technology Corporation at no charge to Kansas teachers who participate in the project.

To participate in the program, teachers must attend a two-day training course to learn to use the software. Cost of the training course is free to Kansas teachers, compliments of Cessna Aircraft Company. Participants completing the training will each receive more than \$900,000 worth of the CAD software to use in their classrooms and in the Real World Design Challenge.

Teachers interested in participating in this Real World Design Challenge should log onto www.ksde.org/default.aspx?tabid=2878.